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PSC 395.01: Politics of Social Movements

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POLITICS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Instructor: Professor Paul Haber
University of Montana, PSc #395
Fall 1994
Meets: TR 11:00-12:30 in McGill 218

Books available for purchase in UC Bookstore:


4. Reader.

This is a course on 20th century social movements in the United States. What role have social movements had in shaping the politics of power, as reflected in public policy, electoral politics, relations of class, race, and gender, and people’s understanding of the world and their place in it? We will repeatedly ask the question, why have particular movements and movement organizations succeeded to the degree they have, and why have they failed to accomplish more?

No assumptions are made regarding students’ familiarity with U.S. history, social movements, or social movement theory. It does, however, assume a willingness to work hard to understand the histories of various social movements and the complexity of competing theoretical approaches. Students are required to not only read the material, but come to class prepared to discuss it.

Your grade will be based on a mid-term and a final exam. In addition, students will have an opportunity to raise their grade through active participation in class discussion or lower their grade by high absenteeism and/or coming regularly unprepared to class. Each day, students must come to class with a written comment or question. These must be kept in a binder or folder of some sort, and will be collected and counted towards participation.

It may well be necessary, from time to time, to rearrange assignments or alter the schedule. Any changes in scheduling will be announced in class. When you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact either the professor or another student to see what has been missed.
Part I: Why are Social Movements so Difficult to Form: the Powers of Prevention

Gaventa, Preface and pp. 1-44 for August 30

Gaventa, pp. 47-121 for September 1. (Give special attention to the conceptual issues raised pp. 47-53, 61-76, 80-96, 109-116.)

Gaventa, pp. 125-201 for September 6 (Give special attention to the conceptual issues raised on 141-145, 161-169, 192-195, 199-201.)

Gaventa, pp. 205-261 for September 8

Part II: Introduction to the Academic Study of Social Movements

McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, pp. 695-714 (up to section on Resource Mobilization) for September 13

McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, pp. 714-729 for September 15

Part III: Three Case Studies and a Point of View

Piven and Cloward, pp. ix-40 for September 20
Piven and Cloward, pp. 41-95 for September 22
Piven and Cloward, pp. 96-180 for September 27
Piven and Cloward, pp. 181-263 for September 29
Piven and Cloward, pp. 264-359 for October 4

MID-TERM EXAM ON OCTOBER 6

Part IV: Movements of the Right


Steve Bruce, "Modernity and fundamentalism: the new Christian right in America" in British Journal of Sociology vol 41, issue 4 December 1990, pp. 477-494 for October 13


Part V: Women's Movement


Wendy Kaminer, "Feminism's Identity Crisis" The Atlantic Monthly, October 1993, pp. 51-68 for October 25

Guest Speaker: October 27

Part VI: Community Organizations: The Case of ACORN

Delgado, pp. ix-61 for October 27
Delgado, pp. 63-122 for November 1
Delgado, pp. 179-231 for November 10

Guest Speaker: November 15

Part VII: Cultural Revolution and the Politics of Direct Action


Epstein, "Radical Politics in Late Capitalist Society" and "Conclusion" pp. 227-278 for November 29
Part VIII: Class Presentations and Exam Writing Workshops

(Details to be determined)

December 1

December 6

December 8

FINAL EXAM DUE ON DECEMBER 13